

# The Bethel Courier.

A Weekly Family Newspaper, Neutral in Politics, devoted to Literature, Agriculture, Education, the Mechanic Arts, and the News of the Day.

VOL. 3.

BETHEL, ME., JULY 5, 1861.

No. 29.

## The Bethel Courier.

Published every Friday morning—Office in  
CHAPMAN'S BLOCK, Bethel Hill, Me.

J. ALDEN SMITH, Editor & Proprietor.

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One copy one year, in advance, \$1.00  
One copy six months, .50  
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If payment is deferred after the expiration  
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travelling public with good board and lodgings  
on reasonable terms.

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months been thoroughly remodeled and re-  
fitted, and furnished from cellar to attic with  
new furniture, and is a most desirable home  
for travellers for business or pleasure.

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## WHO CAUGHT THE PARSON.

BY MRS. S. WYMAN.

"How long has the Parson's wife been  
dead?" said my aunt Elsie.

Why did the red blood flash so quick-  
ly into my face? Because the question  
was one that I was solving that instant  
in my own mind!

"Three years this spring," I replied,  
and then followed a most annoying sil-  
ence, broken only by a very emphatic  
"Hm," from aunt Elsie.

A singular personage was this maiden  
aunt of mine, a woman of many ideas,  
but few words; we were accustomed to  
say that she could express more by a  
gesture, a look, or a single syllable, than  
any ordinary mortal in a dozen senten-  
ces. Her silence now was very aggra-  
vating indeed.

I re-read my letter. It was from a  
former school-mate and dearly loved  
friend, who was then residing with her  
brother, about fifty miles distant and  
contained an invitation to visit her; this  
it ran:

"I am very lonely. The house has  
never been more gloomy since brother's  
wife died. My health is poor this spring,  
and our darling little Willie is pallid  
and thin; his anxious breaks our hearts.  
Innocence and suffering!—why must it  
be? And my brother resembles his  
former self little more than ghosts are  
said to do. We need lively society ex-  
ceedingly, to 'chirk us up,' as aunt Elsie  
would say. Do come and make us a  
long visit. Next week, brother goes  
to the 'Association,' and you must be  
here during his absence. We have a  
fine horse and carriage, a saddle too; so  
bring your 'habit,' and we will have some  
gay doings at this grim and gloom old  
parsonage yet."

Saving my dolorous presence and the  
total want of 'beaux,' I think I may pro-  
mise all the accessories of a pleasant visit.  
But I forewarn you, don't indulge in the  
faintest anticipation of finding even a  
transient admirer here; the race is extinct  
in these parts, the last forlorn specimen  
died a year ago, a bachelor of seventy.  
Come as soon as you can, and without  
fail: the mere anticipation is reviving.  
And bring your cousin Kate with you.

"People begin to think," she con-  
tinued, "that it is quite time that 'Parson'  
took to himself another spouse. Thirty  
females, enjoying 'single celibacy,' (aunt  
Elsie again,) have joined the church dur-  
ing the last year. The sewing society  
'flourishes like a green bay tree,' and the  
female prayer-meeting was never so well  
attended. A great many hints have been  
thrown out, by certain 'mothers of our  
Israel,' to the effect that the influence of  
a pastor's wife is much needed in the  
church to 'take the lead,' as they say.  
Brother receives so many 'tokens of af-  
fection' in the shape of books, slippers,  
bouquets, and such trifles, that I fairly  
shake in my shoes at the sight of a fe-  
male visage near the premises. My fu-  
ture sister-in law is a great terror to me.  
There is a certain 'insinuating vider' in  
the church whose 'eternal interests,'  
and temporal too, perhaps, render fre-  
quent private interviews desirable with  
the shepherd of her soul, as she calls  
brother. She gives me the horrors every  
time she comes. Yesterday brother gave  
me a private sermon, greatly to my edi-  
fication and comfort, on the text, 'Fret  
not thyself, etc,' assuring me that he had  
no thought of marrying again: it was a  
great relief to me."

And with renewed a invitation to visit  
her the letter closed.

I replaced it in its envelope and took  
up my sewing, but still aunt Elsie per-  
served her silence and continued her  
knitting; but seemed to say what I knew  
was in her mind, "Who will catch the  
Parson?—catch, catch, catch the Par-  
son?"

I knew, from the previous experience,  
that when her thin lips did open, after so  
ominous a silence, it did but to emit  
some exceedingly unsavory remark; and  
thinking that the better part of valor  
would justify a retreat, I threw down my  
work, saying that I would go over and  
deliver the invitation to cousin Kate.

I saw Kate on the piazza, when I en-  
tered the gate. As she ran down the  
garden walk, between the rows of fra-

grant shrubbery, to meet me, in her  
snowy morning dress, with its crimson  
giraffe, and her brown floating curls,  
which were never disarranged or quite  
in order either, I thought, as I had done  
many times before, how exquisitely sweet  
and graceful she was! Her figure was  
airy and symmetrical, and when you look-  
ed in her face you thought of all sweet,  
pure things, of the lily among flowers,  
and the "rose in snow." And there was  
an exhilarating atmosphere of healthful  
vitality about her; and her very presence  
was like a keen, fresh breeze, as it comes  
through the pines down the mountain  
sides, and tosses the long branches of the  
old maple trees, and bends the tall  
poplars that skirt the roadside by our  
grandfather's door in the old Green  
Mountain State.

Very lovely indeed was cousin Kate,  
but neither highly intellectual, nor edu-  
cated. It was much to be regretted, I  
thought, that she had no taste for liter-  
ary or scientific pursuits. She would  
never make a congenial companion for a  
man of intellect and education; she could  
never appreciate or sympathize with ex-  
alted aims and noble efforts. I had  
taken some pains to elevate her tastes,  
but at last relinquished my object, con-  
cluding to let her womanhood ripen after  
its own sweet will, and a very sweet rip-  
ening it promised to be indeed.

I read her that portion of my letter  
which contained the invitation from our  
mutual friend; but for some motive, not  
quite clear to my mind even now, I with-  
held what she said of the future "Par-  
soness."

Kate hesitated a little. "I should  
dearly love to visit Helen," she said "if  
it was not for that awful Parson: he  
frightens away my breath with his dole-  
ful visage. But I can play with the baby  
while you discuss theology with him; and  
besides, we needn't stay after his return  
from the Association. Yes, I will go."

So the matter was arranged, and the day  
after the Parson left home, we arrived  
at his house.

Our warm-hearted friend gave us a cor-  
dial welcome, but the hand we clasped,  
and the cheek we kissed, were thin and  
wan, and there were deep lines of care  
and pain where the brow should have  
been smooth. And the baby, as every  
one called him, although he was three  
years old, was a puny, weak child, a  
victim, as I at once surmised, to over-  
anxiety and nursing.

The first week of our visit we spent  
very agreeably. Kate took immediate  
possession of Willie; and the poor little  
boy, who was shy of all other strangers,  
"gathered up" to her, as his old nurse  
said "in a surprising manner."

Helen and I spent the time in deligh-  
tful rides and rambles, or in reading and  
literary pursuits generally. We read  
German. We botanized. We geolo-  
gized. In short we pursued each of the  
sciences, for an exceedingly short dis-  
tance, of course; although a scrupulous  
regard for the truth in the matter pre-  
vents my recording the capture of any.  
It was all agreeable, very—but still I  
was secretly glad when the week was  
ended—and the time of the Parson's re-  
turn had arrived. I had not seen him for  
five years, and remembered him as an  
embodiment of intellect and manly  
valor. I had listened, spell-bound and  
awed, to the brilliancy of his conversa-  
tional powers, when youth and disdisce-  
pline made me only a listener. I could not  
conceal from myself the fact that his was  
the voice which had opened to me a life  
of intellectual enjoyment undreamed of  
before. I longed, therefore, to acknowl-  
edge the great obligation; to listen once  
again to the noble sentiments which fell  
from his lips; and to receive from him  
solutions to the bewildering problems of  
life, which, as yet, were the stars of the  
sphinx for me.

On the appointed day the pastor re-  
turned. His reception of us was grave  
and chilling—to say the least—"As  
though we had come to his wake prema-  
turely," Kate said. He seemed utterly  
prostrated, both in body and mind, and  
for several days we saw him only at table.  
I could not understand it. This was not  
his natural temperament I knew. For-  
tunately he was agreeable, even facetious.  
I could not believe him thus grave-visag-  
ed and mannered from principle of hy-  
poocrisy. It must be the result solely of

depressing circumstances.

The weekly lecture I attended with  
pleasure, hoping to find something of the  
former charm of his eloquence. But the  
sermon was cold and dry. I was disap-  
pointed and saddened, far less by any  
want of cordial attention to ourselves,  
than by a great change which I perceiv-  
ed in my friend.

The next Saturday afternoon, the Par-  
son entered our cheerful sitting-room,  
some time before tea was announced,  
seeming unusually depressed. I think  
his misery had at last made him greg-  
arious, and glad even of our poor so-  
ciety. Little was said by any of us,  
however; there seemed to be a "hush"  
upon us, to borrow Helen's ingenious ex-  
pression for unsociability: it was quite a re-  
lief when tea time came. At tea table  
the Parson exclaimed, "Oh, my sermon!  
Saturday night and not one word writ-  
ten: not even a text—how can I do it?"

As he left the table, he said, "I think  
I will take a short ride, and if either of  
you ladies can endure my dismal pres-  
ence, I should be glad of your society:  
I shall be at the door in ten minutes, and  
shall probably be too ill-natured to wait  
an instant."

"You must go, Kate," I said, after he  
left.

"No, indeed!" she answered quickly,  
and then checking herself, added, "Wil-  
lie couldn't spare auntie at bed time,  
could he? She must sing him to sleep."  
The little boy answered by a pouting lip  
and a sweet earnest, and both Kate and  
Helen insisted that I should accompany  
the parson.

I was secretly pleased to do so: it was  
the golden hour I had wished for. Had  
so much of my own experience to tell  
him, so many questions to ask, there  
could be no better opportunity.

But every effort that I made to intro-  
duce any subject of conversation failed,  
or if he seemed to be interested for a  
moment, his mind soon relapsed into its  
old apathy.

After repeated efforts, which became  
exquisitely painful and mortifying to me,  
the idea slowly dawned upon my mind,  
that it was not intellectual entertain-  
ment that the Parson needed. This had  
become a weariness and satiety to him.  
He needed to be amused. Anything  
which changed the habitual current of  
his thoughts and by smoothing his over-  
excited nerves, aroused a healthy flow of  
animal spirits, was what was required to  
renew the vigor of both mind and body.

Thus I reasoned. But what could I  
do to amuse the Parson?

I felt fully able to discuss with him the  
doctrine of "Predestination" and "Elec-  
tion," or the "Foundation of Moral Obli-  
gation" or even "Infant Baptism." I  
had my own views upon the subject of  
"Human Depravity" and the "Future  
State," which I should have been deligh-  
ted to have presented to him. I was  
somewhat familiar with the ancient schools  
of philosophy, and the fundamental prin-  
ciples of Chinese, and could repeat Em-  
erson's "Brahma," if not understand it.  
In history, both sacred and profane, I  
was passably well read, and there were  
none of the "Ologies" which I could not  
at least talk about. I could quote poetry  
also, if necessary; and of all schools,  
from Milton down, but of what avail  
was all this? Wherewithal, could I  
amuse the Parson? For the first time in  
my life, I was obliged to admit to myself  
the unflattering truth, that a woman,  
whose mind was stuffed with poetry and  
inflamed with philosophy, might not be  
able to afford all the companionship that  
an intellectual man might need; that  
there were mental conditions into which  
the highest and strongest might fall, when  
a warm flow of simple human affection,  
or contagious vivacity of spirits, would  
be worth all attainable lore.

"Let us visit her grave," he said at  
last; and at the gate of the cemetery we  
met Helen and Kate.

Not one word was spoken by any of  
us, as we stood by the tomb. It was a  
high, smooth mound on which grew many  
white-blossomed plants, and at its head,  
a simple, white slab bore the words:  
"OUR PARSON'S WIFE."

The Parson leaned upon the railing,  
quite overcome with emotion, until we  
turned to go: then he laid his hand upon  
the turf above her head, with a move-

ment of affection as though he was ca-  
ressing her hair, and wept audibly.

After our return, Helen was attacked  
with a paroxysm of distressing pain, such  
as she was subject to, and, for an hour,  
Kate and I were at her bedside. When,  
at last, she slept, we returned to the pa-  
rison, and there sat the Parson, leaning  
his head upon a stand, a lamentable pic-  
ture of suffering and dejection. He raised  
his head, saying "You have come to a  
gloomy house, ladies; I regret that it  
is not in my power to make your visit a  
more agreeable one." Then he spoke of  
his dead wife, and of his grief for her  
loss. "There was a mingling of self-re-  
proach in it," he said; "the welfare of  
his people lay ever nearer her heart than  
his own. She sacrificed herself—he had  
sacrificed her to his church; and he felt  
that, but for this, she would have been  
spared years longer to him," and again  
he wept.

I must own that the Parson's grief did  
not touch my sympathies very deeply.  
I wished rather to reason with him: to  
tell him that the departed one would not  
wish his manhood to be destroyed in un-  
availing sorrow: that she would bid him  
emulate her own noble endeavors. I  
skewly suspected that his digestive  
apparatus was out of order, and desired  
also to recommend alkali.

The Parson was no longer my idol as  
formerly. He had violated one of my  
"Fundamental Principles," which is, that  
no human soul is worthy the sacrifice of  
another. But I had somewhat less con-  
fidence in my philosophy than formerly.  
Having nothing else to offer, I was silent.  
But I looked up at Kate. She was weep-  
ing!

I could generally read Kate in her face.  
But I could not do it now. There was  
a strife in her heart, I thought, between  
melancholy and some strong sense of du-  
ty. What could it be?

At last inclination yielded, and her  
sense of duty triumphed. Kate left her  
seat and went directly to the Parson.—  
Without hesitation or timidity, she laid  
her soft, cool hand on his forehead, and  
said quietly:

"You need care. Helen is sick, and I  
will take her place to-night."

Without waiting a reply she brought  
his dressing gown and slippers, and bade  
him put them on; then found pillows for  
the lounge, and made him lie down upon  
them; and then she gave him some sim-  
ple medicine, and bathed his head, mes-  
merizing it in the most soothing manner  
possible. When she spoke to him, it was  
in a dignified style, quite unlike her-  
self; and he obeyed in a dazed, unresist-  
ing way, as though he had no power to  
do otherwise. Kate had never, volun-  
tarily spoken with the Parson during our  
visit: the awe in which she held him  
amounted almost to dislike. Hence the  
feelings which could have induced this  
change must have been exceedingly pow-  
erful.

There was no mistaking their charac-  
ter, however; for although every word  
and movement was gentle and solicitous,  
still it was plainly mercy and compassion  
for a suffering fellow mortal, and not  
personal interest, that prompted them.  
I thought, as I watched her, of the "cup  
of cold water," of the "oil and wine," of  
the angel-troubled waters and the healed  
bathers; and I knew she was one of those  
for whom the beatitudes were in re-  
serve.

It may seem a small thing to some;  
but I believe that strong souls, inspired  
by the true martyr spirit, have gone  
shouting to the stake, with less reluctance  
and self-renewal, than this timid girl  
went to her duty at the Pastor's side.

After a little time the Parson seemed  
somewhat relieved, and then Kate left  
the room, returning soon with a dish of  
hot tea and a few tempting dainties, say-  
ing to her patient, "You took no supper  
to-night; now you must eat." He hesi-  
tated a moment "You will feel better  
for it," she said. At this he resigned  
himself, and made a heartier meal than  
I had ever seen him take; after which he  
was permitted to return to the lounge, and  
Kate resumed her soothing attentions.

"Sing to me," he said "and, perhaps,  
I can sleep."

"What shall I sing?"

"I would not live always."

Kate's voice was sweet and low, and  
when she had finished the hymn, the

Parson was sleeping. He lay very still  
for a few moments, and then suddenly  
clasped one of her hands in both his own,  
exclaiming, "Oh! my wife! God bless  
you!"

A crimson cloud swept over Kate's  
face, and she disengaged her hand, say-  
ing, "You have been dreaming; it is  
little Kate Berry."

The Parson was very much agitated,  
and Kate also; but she quickly composed  
herself and began singing that sweetest  
of all modern hymns:

"Shall Jesus bear the cross alone  
And all the world go free?"

The Parson did not dream again.—  
After some moments of silence he said,  
"Now read me a chapter from the Bible;  
any one—no matter which."

Kate did not leave her seat, but re-  
peated from memory that beautiful and  
appropriate chapter, beginning, "Let  
not your heart be troubled," etc. Truly,  
thought I, my simple-hearted cousin  
possesses the inestimable lore.

When Kate had finished, the Parson  
arose, saying, "I am quite relieved. My  
head is free from pain, and I am furni-  
shed with a text and a whole sermon also.  
My gratitude to the kind heart, which  
prompted these attentions, is greater  
than words can express. I shall never  
forget them. Good night."

When we were left alone, Kate's self-  
control left her, and she wept like a child.  
I drew her head to my shoulder, and tried  
to soothe her, but it was with a painful  
sense of unworthiness, as though she  
were one "whose shoe's latchet I was not  
worthy to unloose." For I had caught  
a faint glimpse of that higher sphere of  
moral purity and excellence, to which no  
cultivation of the intellect alone can raise  
us.

Cousin Kate and I remained at the  
parsonage many weeks. Meanwhile,  
the acquaintance, so favorably commen-  
ced, progressed in sweet idyllic measure.  
By simple, unconscious wiles, Kate won  
him back to sweet attunement with all  
harmonies: to peace and health and man-  
ly aspirations.

A medical professor of my acquaint-  
ance frequently begins the first lecture  
of his annual course with this apt apho-  
rism, "You will find, gentlemen, as you  
go through the world, that human nature  
prevails pretty generally!" To many  
weaknesses of this universal inheritance  
I am an heir, and I think I am relating  
no exceptional experience, when I say  
that the sight of the daily increasing love  
of the Parson and Kate awakened feel-  
ings, not wholly unmingled with pain  
and mortification. No person of either  
sex, conscious of attractions, sees them  
entirely ignored without similar emotions.  
But the Parson was not, as formerly, my  
ideal: so I said to myself calmly, "This  
ends my dreams!"

One evening, as Helen and I entered  
the parlor, after our return from a short  
ramble, we found Kate and the Parson  
seated upon the sofa together. The lat-  
ter rose, saying, "Come in, both of you,  
I have something to tell you."

When we were seated, he said very  
quietly:

"Helen, Kate has promised to be my  
wife. How will you receive her?"

"As a dear, welcome sister," was the  
reply, and Helen kissed the sweet, blush-  
ing girl.

Little more was said. As we sat in  
the gathering shadows, I doubt whether  
four hearts often beat together in silence,  
filled with more conflicting emotions.

The Parson's plans were very simple  
and they were plainly told.

"You know, Kate," he said, "that in  
consenting to be a Parson's wife, you ac-  
cept apostolic poverty and humble ways  
of life. We can spend one month at the  
sea-side, and then we must return to our  
duties here."

"But perhaps you do not know," said  
Kate, "that I have a small fortune of my  
own; I believe it is fifty thousand dol-  
lars; and you must leave your studies,  
for six months at least, while we travel  
all over Europe together, and then we  
will return here, if you wish."

A strange look broke over the Parson's  
face, one of surprise, regret, and self-  
deprecation, struggling together. He  
dropped the hand he had been holding,  
and said, "You are very rich, Kate. I  
never thought of that. It is too great a  
sacrifice, and you must take back your



pledge to be a humble Parson's wife." Kate put her hand to his, and said, "Whither thou goest, I will go; thy people are my people, and thy God mine." And so it was arranged. After we had left the parlor, Helen was as full of exclamation points, as a brier-brush of thorns. "Who would have believed it four months ago! Kate Berry wed my brother! And in his own house too! Well, well, you or I may marry the King of the Carnival Islands yet, for all anybody knows. What a funny little Parsoness she will make!"

When Kate and I returned, after our visit, Aunt Elsie met me with her unfailing cordiality. "Who caught the Parsoness?" she asked, with characteristic astuteness. "Kate," I answered, and nothing more was said about the matter.

I never make what might be called "heart disclosures," and had I wished a confidential Aunt Elsie would not have been chosen.

The following October Kate was married. Her preparations were so simple that no one suspected their object. A few weeks previous, the Parson had announced his proposed trip through Europe and tendered his resignation, which the church refused to accept, no one, however, supposing that a wife was to accompany him. His paring with his people was very tender and affecting, particularly to the female portion of the church.

It is more than three years since my cousin's bride. The married pair returned from Europe in due season, the Parson bringing back with him renewed health and vigor, both of body and mind; and I listen to his preaching and conversation with more than the old enthusiasm.

Kate also was changed upon her return. Perhaps she had, only developed the sweet bud that had blossomed into a flower of even rarer beauty and fragrance than it had promised. I can but faintly express the change when I say that she seemed to have brought away from the sun-dimmed shrines and temples of olden art and religion which she had visited, the halo of a Madonna in her soul.

The Parson's wife and her noble predecessor in seeing societies, nor at maternal meetings, nor leads in the prayer circles. But in spite of many prejudices against her, she has won to herself, by her sweet character and consistent life, the hearts of all her husband's parishioners, and is in the fullest sense "Theodora," a bearer of peace and gifts to her followers.

Even the old Parsonage has met with something like a rejuvenation. On the late cheerless walls the sunlight finds rare pictures, and about the room are vases of exquisite sculpturing. Where weeds once rankled, sweet flowers bloom. There is sunshine and fragrance for gloom; and for silence, music and soft laughter. I need not feel a strange, weird charm and change in all.

And now I hear Kate's singing, as by Willie's little bed the rocks his baby sleep. "Hark! It is the same perfect hymn she sang on that evening when the Parson called her wife in a prophetic dream. Is she thinking at this moment of that time?"

In view of the cemetery, the "Hunters' nose" lay broad, bright beams upon two graves; for by the first wife the water stopped. "Oh, my best friend, my heart is here and sore without you."

**THE FIRST MASSACHUSETTS REGIMENT.**—The New York Herald's Washington correspondent writes concerning the Massachusetts First Regiment, as follows: "The Massachusetts First Regiment are finely located on the banks of the Potomac in Georgetown, and in full view of Fort Corcoran, on Arlington Heights. Their evening parades are very fine, and are usually witnessed by a crowd of ladies and gentlemen. Lieut. Col. Wells, of this regiment, was selected by Gen. Mansfield as officer of the day yesterday. Very difficult and arduous duty, especially during the night hours of the twenty-fourth. Col. Wells is Judge of one of the criminal courts of Massachusetts, appointed by Gov. Banks. It is a life office, but when the President called for troops, he left the bench for the saddle. A visit to this regiment to-day developed the fact that they are victims of numerous impostures. They are supplied with the sand, chocolate and pea coffee. They found a difficulty in obtaining their regular rations to-day, which the special agent appointed by the War Department is looking after this evening. The regiment is badly in want of a new uniform. The one given them by their State is entirely worn out."

**OUR FOREIGN COMMERCIAL ARRANGEMENTS.**—Impressed with the necessity of some active measures on the part of our Government to extend our commercial relations with other countries, which have been too much neglected by previous administrations, a number of influential bankers and merchants in this city have held several meetings for the purpose of advancing our foreign trade, modifying our existing commercial treaties and aiding the Secretary of the Treasury. An association has, in consequence, been duly organized to-day, to carry out these views. James Gallatin has accepted the office of President of the Association. The Government has thus far received the most substantial aid from the patriotic merchants of New York.—N. Y. Post.

**NAVAL.**—On the 15th instant the flag-ship, Mississippi left Pensacola, but going out of the harbor. The steamers Mount Vernon and Crusader went to her assistance, and after taking out her heavy guns and coal she floated on the 16th. She received no injury, but returned for coal and water, and sailed again on the 15th, from Pensacola.

Hon. Noah Smith has been appointed Assistant Secretary of the U. S. Senate.

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## WAR NEWS.

### From Baltimore.

### ARREST OF MARSHAL KANE.

Proclamation by Gen. Banks.

BALTIMORE, June 27.—3 o'clock, A. M. George P. Kane, Marshal of Police, was arrested at his house by order of General Banks, and conveyed to Fort Mifflin, where he is now a prisoner. General Banks has issued a proclamation naming John R. Kenley, of Maryland, as Provost Marshal, superseding the power of the police commissioners. Kenley is to exercise supreme control over the department until some known loyal citizen is appointed to act as Marshal. The proclamation gives as a reason for the arrest of Kane, that he is known to be aiding and abetting those in armed rebellion against the Government at the head of armed forces, which he has used to conceal rather than detect acts of treason to the Government.

### ARRIVAL OF A PRIZE SHIP AT NEW YORK.

PHILADELPHIA, June 27. Prize ship Amelia arrived at the Navy Yard this afternoon, with a cargo of iron crates, camp ovens, equipment and machinery. The vessel is valued at \$12,000, cargo \$20,000. It is supposed that arms are concealed in the crates. She was delivered into the custody of Judge Cadwallader. A Prize Commissioner will be appointed in a few days.

### EXCITEMENT AT BAL







